9 June 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Morning Meeting of 9 June 1969

Godfrey reported that a very large Soviet joint armed services exercise is taking place in the Sea of Japan and that OCI will publish on it regularly in view of State's expressed concern.

D/ONE briefed on his recent conversation with Colonel Fitzgerald, former U. S. Army Attache in Moscow and now assigned to DOD/ISA.

DDS reported that we are employing thirty-eight Youth Opportunity participants to work on the grounds this summer. He commented that most are from the District, [redacted] 25X1 [redacted]

DDS noted that prices in the Executive Dining Room will be increased by approximately 15 percent on or about 1 July.

Carver reported that reaction to the President's Midway announcement on U. S. troop withdrawals was about as anticipated.

Carver reported that Communist offensive operations have somewhat slackened after three days of heightened activity. The Director noted the rocketing of a hospital wing as reported in today's press.

Maury read from Senator Ervin's letter to Subcommittee members urging that they move forward with their consideration of S. 782. Maury noted that the Director may wish to reconsider his earlier opposition to approaching individual senators. Houston noted repeated attempts to get in touch with Ken BeLieu. The Director indicated that we should first seek to get the White House organized on this matter. He asked Houston to pursue BeLieu and indicated that, if this fails, he will then consider discussing the matter at the White House himself.

DD/S&T pointed to the William Beecher item in today's New York Times reporting that analysis by intelligence experts in the Pentagon suggests that Soviet multiple warheads have a capability to reach three scattered targets. DD/S&T commented that the analysis was made in the Defense Department and was hurried and wrong.

DDCI commented that he will be addressing the Army War College tomorrow.

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L. K. White

NEW YORK TIMES - 9 Jun 1969

SOVIET GAIN SEEN IN MIRV PROGRAM

Pentagon Analysis of Tests Bolsters U.S. Advocates of Continued Testing

By WILLIAM BEECHER
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, June 8 — A new analysis of Soviet missile tests in the Pacific is reinforcing arguments of those within the Administration who favor continuation of United States tests of multiple warheads.

The analysis, by intelligence experts in the Pentagon primarily, suggests that multiple warheads now being tested by the Russians may be capable of being guided to three scattered targets and powerful enough to destroy hardened missile silos.

Until now, United States specialists had believed the Russians were testing a three-part multiple warhead all three elements of which landed in a fairly tight, predictable pattern near one another, attacking only a single target.

Thus the new intelligence information, reliable sources say, suggests the Russians are further along than previously thought toward development of multiple, independently targetable re-entry vehicles, or MIRV's.

The United States, in the early stages of its multiple warhead program, also developed a three-part warhead whose elements landed in a tight pattern against a single target. Since then it has gone on to a more sophisticated system that directs the warheads against several targets, but in a manner different from that the Russians now are thought to be using.

The United States has been testing such weapons since last summer. In recent days criticism of these tests has been rising both within the Administration and in Congress. The critics suggest these tests might jeopardize achievement of a strategic arms freeze with the Russians.

Once the United States has the demonstrated ability to field such potent weapons, it is argued, the Russians would fear to end their development short of the same capability. And it would be hard to ascertain upon inspection, without actually taking a missile apart, whether it contained a MIRV.

Secretary of State William P. Rogers referred to the Russian missile tests and arms control implications in a news conference last Thursday.

"The Soviet Union is testing and we can't stop our testing on the hope that sometime an agreement would be reached," he declared.

Continued MIRV tests, he added, "won't prevent the talks from being successful and it wouldn't affect the talks, I don't believe."

Then, the next day, after a closed-door argument with members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Rogers emerged to concede that successful MIRV tests over the next few months could raise "new problems of inspection" in an arms control agreement, but that the tests should not prevent such an agreement from being achieved.

American strategic planners say they are developing MIRV's to insure that if the Soviet Union installs a heavy missile defense system, United States missiles would still be able to penetrate to their urban targets in a retaliatory blow.

The assurance that United States missiles can respond to a surprise attack by destroying much of the Soviet Union is the foundation of American nuclear deterrence, they say.

To Overwhelm Defense

MIRV's are designed to overwhelm a large missile defense by showering so many warheads over enemy territory that they will exhaust all available defensive missiles and then destroy their targets.

But these weapons have another potential quality: if individual warheads are sufficiently potent and accurate, they could be used in a surprise attack to destroy a foe's intercontinental ballistic missiles and thus eliminate his ability to retaliate effectively.

It is this second quality that is the focus of the current debate.

At present the United States is developing a three-warhead MIRV for its Minuteman 3 and a 14-warhead MIRV for its Poseidon missile. Tests of these warheads started last August and are slated to continue into early next year.

The MIRV vehicle is sometimes referred to as a space "bus." As the bus travels through space it makes slight maneuvers and pops out each re-entry vehicle, or warhead, on a predetermined course to a different target. The warheads are spaced from 20 to 50 miles apart, so that no one enemy defensive missile could knock down more than one warhead.

The present plans call for MIRV's to be installed on 500 Minuteman 3 missiles, out of a total Minuteman force of 1,000, and on 496 Poseidon missiles out of a total Poseidon-Polaris force of 656. The United States' strategic missile force would then have more than 9,000 warheads.

But the United States is willing to alter or scrap these plans if a mutually advantageous arms freeze can be negotiated, officials declare.

The Soviet Union has been testing a three-part multiple warhead for its largest missile, the SS-9. Each warhead is believed to be about five megatons—the equivalent of five million tons of TNT—roughly 25 times as large as the warheads in the United States MIRV's.

Evidence from current Soviet tests in the Pacific suggests the Russians may be putting guidance equipment and a small propulsion system on each re-entry vehicle, rather than following the United States pattern of putting such equipment only on the larger dispenser, the "bus."

Some senior officials say the nub of the current Administration apprehension centers on the fact that the SS-9, which they say the Soviet Union continues to build at a rate of about 50 a year, carries much larger multiple warheads than would be needed if the Russians were primarily concerned with penetrating a missile defense in the United States for the purpose of destroying American cities in a second strike. Such weapons, however, would be ideal for a first-strike attack against hardened Minuteman sites, these officials say.

By contrast, they say, United States MIRV's are too small to be relied on for a high-confidence first strike against hardened Soviet ICBM silos. "We could substantially cut down the number of warheads in a Poseidon and thus get bigger warheads with a greater counterforce capability," one scientist declared, "but that's not what we're striving for."

To date, according to Administration officials, the Russians have more than 1,200 intercontinental missiles, in place or going in. More than 225 of these are the giant SS-9 missiles, the officials say, and if a 50-a-year pace continues the Russians will have about 500 SS-9's in five years.

Such a force, with three warheads in each SS-9 and an accuracy of about one-quarter mile, could destroy 95 per cent of Minuteman missiles in a surprise attack, according to these officials. Some outside scientists contend that the destruction would not be this great.

Concern that the Russians are in fact trying to erode the United States' deterrent power is a large factor behind the Administration's effort to get a limited missile defense to provide some close-in protection for Minutemen, and to develop MIRV's to insure that missiles surviving a first strike could penetrate to their targets.

3 Schools of Thought

Within the Administration there are three main schools of thought on whether the Russians want to ban MIRV's.

One school holds that they are very much interested and that continuation of an active testing program by the United States will spur the Russians into trying to achieve an arms limitation agreement. Under this theory, continuation of plans to test and even start deployment of weapons capable of carrying MIRV's should speed the whole bargaining process.

Another school holds that the Russians are not anxious for a ban, since MIRV's would give

them a good capability of knocking out Minuteman missiles. Members of this school say the Russians know United States MIRV's are now too small to attack hardened silos very effectively. Thus, unless the United States built larger MIRV warheads, the lack of a ban would be to Russia's advantage, this school holds. According to this school, it makes no difference, so far as the Russians' attitude toward an arms agreement goes, whether or not the United States continues testing.

Members of the third school of thought, including some Congressmen and some officials of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, said that if both countries genuinely want to keep the MIRV genie in the bottle they should stop tests immediately. Otherwise, members of this school ask, what is to prevent either side from cheating and deploying MIRV's secretly in existing missiles?

Most authorities agree that, short of actually dismantling a missile, which neither country is likely to approve, it would be impossible to detect cheating of this kind.

Is the Genie Out?

A significant number of officials, in the Pentagon, State Department and White House, are suggesting it might already be too late to keep the genie bottled up. But this would not be disastrous to the cause of arms control, they contend.

If the number of defensive missiles can be limited to a low level, and if the number of offensive missiles and bombers can be frozen at about present levels, they say, it might not be necessary to ban MIRV's.

Rather, a limit could be imposed restricting the dimensions or rocket thrust of offensive missiles to those of existing missiles. That the number of missiles was kept frozen could be checked with spy satellites, they say. As for size, they continue, an occasional spot check on a missile site with a tape measure might provide sufficient inspection.

Physicists can accurately predict, the officials say, just how many MIRV warheads could be deployed on missiles of a specified size and thrust. The present force of intercontinental missiles in each country would not be enough—even if MIRV's were installed in them—to give either side a convincing first strike capability, these officials argue.

Interviews with several Administration planners, and Mr. Rogers's news conference statements of Thursday, suggest that this view is now being embraced increasingly within the Nixon Administration.